

# Basic Detail Report

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## Grafton

**Vessel number**

HV000298

**Date**

1907

**Primary Maker**

Tsurumatsu Shiosaki

### Description

GRAFTON was built by Shiosaki in 1907. Like many of the Japanese involved in the pearling industry he was based at Thursday Island and is known to have built a large number of luggers on the island. GRAFTON is carvel planked and was gaff rigged. Over its lifetime it has been repaired and modified but the original hull shape and construction remains intact. Many early pearling luggers were substantially rebuilt during their working lives, creating a virtually new boat, especially when an engine was added. In GRAFTON's case the only alteration visible was cutting an aperture in the deadwood for the propeller, one advantage of having a deadwood keel rather than one planked down the sternpost to the heel. First registered to Burns Philp and Co., GRAFTON was sold to Wyben Pearling Company in 1913. This was a subsidiary of Burns Philp, established to operate the pearl shell business at Thursday Island. GRAFTON remained active as a pearling lugger in the Thursday Island fleet until World War II. During the war it suffered the same fate as other luggers and was taken over by the Army and used in the Torres Strait area, with the number AL 263. Owned by the Commonwealth Government during the war, it was sold it back to Wyben Pearling when wartime activities ceased in 1946. In 1947 GRAFTON was again registered to Burns Philp upon the winding up of the Wyben Pearling subsidiary. GRAFTON was numbered in the pearling fleet as A25 from 1907 to 1957, and A49 from 1958 to 1976. Before World War II GRAFTON and other Thursday Island luggers were typically crewed by Japanese, however after the war mixed crews were common and would have included Indigenous Torres Strait Islanders. Burns Philp retained ownership until about 1964 when it was sold to Pearls Pty Ltd which operated GRAFTON until 1976. It was then sold and registered to Dianna Hergatt in Cairns, Queensland. GRAFTON's history after this time is not well documented, but it is known to have been through a series of owners and was converted to a yacht with a large wheelhouse. At one point GRAFTON sank. After being raised the underwriter sold it off as a wreck. New owners began the repair process and were successful in making it watertight. This entry was prepared from information supplied by Tony Hunt in association with the West Australian Maritime Museum.

### Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 15.24 m x 14.32 m x 3.05 m x 1.83 m, 24.61 tonnes (50 ft x 47 ft x 10 ft x 6 ft, 25 tons)